



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**INDIA**

## CASE STUDY

# An Indian radio show raises money for HIV positive children

**USAID-supported radio show raised nearly \$90,000 to provide health insurance for over 2,500 children living with HIV in Tamil Nadu, India.**



Photo: USAID/Population Services International

Acclaimed Indian film actor, Kamal Hassan, worked with radio station Hello FM to raise funds for children living with HIV

*"Hello FM would like to be known for more than just entertainment. I am happy we could participate in this very special project. Our goal now is to ensure that HIV positive children are covered under the insurance plan, so that their future is as good as ours is. Because all children are our children."*

**Rajeev Nambiar,**  
CEO, Hello FM

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**CHALLENGE:** The USAID-supported Project Connect, which fostered public private partnerships to address HIV/AIDS and TB, brought the first private sector health insurance policy for people living with HIV to India in 2008. Although the insurance premiums were inexpensive by industry standards, they were out of reach for many HIV positive adults. USAID was able to create employment opportunities so that low-income adults could afford the premiums, but there was no easy solution to funding the premiums for children, who are much less likely to get HIV treatment than their adult counterparts. Many HIV positive children are orphans or live with sick parents who are unable to pay for health insurance.

**INITIATIVE:** A fundraising campaign seemed to be the most effective way to raise funds for the children's premiums, while at the same time educating people about children living with HIV. USAID and its partners approached media organizations in the south Indian state of Tamil Nadu and were able to get the state's largest radio station, Hello FM, to collaborate in the campaign. Acclaimed Indian film star Kamal Hassan joined the campaign and offered to host a fundraising radio show. He gave the campaign the name *Petralthan Pillaiya* or "all children are our children." Tata Teleservices, a telecommunications company, helped to collect donations. USAID launched the campaign on World AIDS Day 2009, with an ambitious target of raising \$15,000 to pay the insurance premiums for 1,000 children.

**RESULTS:** The results were tremendous! The campaign ran for a month and raised three times the proposed target, allowing over 2,500 children to participate in the insurance plan. The success of the campaign inspired all the partners to participate in a similar initiative the following year. With the \$46,000 they raised in 2010, much of it through small donations from taxi drivers, schoolchildren, and other individuals, Hello FM and Kamal Hassan are in the process of establishing a trust fund for children living with HIV. The interest earned through the trust fund will help pay the annual premiums for the children now covered under the insurance plan.